

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 YEREVAN 002001

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN, G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWMN](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: EUR/TIP: INTERIM ASSESSMENT FOR ARMENIA

REF: STATE 188750

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

1. (SBU) Since January 2005, the GOAM has made progress on fighting trafficking in persons, especially in promoting the National Action Plan and increasing prosecutions under the anti-trafficking statute, but still has a significant way to go on some crucial areas. The following responses are geared to refel questions.

A) PROMOTING/IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

2. (SBU) The Government of Armenia has made good progress in officially distributing, publicly promoting and implementing its 2004 National Action Plan.

-- In order to deliver the message on the dangers of trafficking and to prevent it, staff from the Prosecutor General's Office frequently appeared on TV and provided interviews to other mass media outlets.

-- The Deputy Head of the Department of Migration and Refugees, Lyalya Aslanyan, provided a number of interviews throughout the year. In particular, during a 50-minute program that aired in September on Public Radio she discussed trafficking, the National Plan of Action and the difference between trafficking and prostitution.

-- Government-controlled media have increased both the frequency and usefulness of programming warning of the dangers of trafficking.

B) ASSISTING VICTIMS, INCREASING POLICE REFERRALS

3. (SBU) The Government of Armenia has made some progress in increasing the number of victims assisted and referred to shelters.

-- During 2004 a total of 12 victims were referred to shelters (run by UMCOR and Hope and Help) by Armenian law enforcement bodies. In contrast, during 2005 UMCOR worked with 9 victims, 4 of whom were referred by the National Security Service, 4 by the Police and 1 was identified by their subcontractor, Democracy Today NGO. These 9 victims were hosted in their shelter. The police also invited UMCOR to interview 4 TIP victims in order to convince them to go to the shelter, but the victims chose to not take advantage of the shelter. UMCOR also worked with one TIP victim without placing him in the shelter. Hope and Help NGO did not have a shelter for most of 2005, because their funding was interrupted. They are currently restarting the program and they received their first victim on November 2, 2005, referred to them by the National Security Service. Overall during 2005, Armenian law enforcement bodies have already referred 9 victims to TIP shelters and tried to refer an additional 4 victims, a slight increase over 2004.

-- The MFA repatriated 5 women in 2004 from Dubai. One of these women was the trafficker of two of the victims that the MFA returned, and was tried and convicted in 2004 under charges of pimping. (Although the MFA did not have information on what happened to these girls after their return, none of these women were referred to a shelter.) Already in 2005, the MFA has repatriated 9 victims from Dubai. UMCOR was involved in two of the cases, and bought the ticket for one of the girls, who stayed in the shelter for only two days, then left. The MFA also noted that over the past six months the GOAM had

paid significant attention to improving conditions in the border check points. Within the framework of the "Export Control and Border Security" agreement signed between Armenia and the USA, a new border checkpoint in Bagratashen was built that includes a special room with a small kitchen for refugees, asylum seekers and trafficking victims, where they can stay for one or two days until they are transferred to the appropriate agency or organization.

C) CHARGING TRAFFICKERS WITH TRAFFICKING

14. (SBU) The Government of Armenia has made significant progress in applying Article 132 of the criminal code to prosecute traffickers to the full extent of the law.

-- While in 2004 there was only one case brought on charges of Article 132, during the first 10 months of 2005 there have already been 9 criminal cases brought against 14 defendants on charges of Article 132 (6 of the 9 cases are still working their way through the courts).

D) TRAINING PROSECUTORS AND JUDGES

15. (SBU) The Government of Armenia has made good progress in educating and training prosecutors and limited progress in educating and training judges about the new statute.

-- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Yerevan Office trained 15 police and Ministry of Justice representatives in Yerevan September 25-

16. According to the IOM post-action report, "Participants discussed and confronted modus operandi of traffickers and trends observed in Armenia. The training also focused on anti-trafficking national legislation conformity with UN standards, in particular with respect to the Palermo Protocol, and on operational problem areas. Participants exchanged information on existing regulation and on the methodologies applied to counteract the phenomenon in Armenia. The training module comprises things to do and things to avoid, providing a comprehensive range of hints on human trafficking law enforcement issues, in addition to a specific and concise set of information and realistic instructions for the best practice on interviewing."

-- The Special Unit on Combating TIP and Illegal Migration of the Prosecutor General's Office has prepared instructions on how to investigate TIP cases and sent it to all regional and community prosecutors for them to examine the instructions and organize training in the regions based on the instructions.

-- In the second half of 2005, the Prosecutor General's Educational and Research Center published 500 copies of a 151-page book on "Methods of Investigation of Cases on TIP, Prostitution and other forms of Sexual Exploitation." The book also includes the international conventions and protocols specific to TIP, and has been distributed in the regions. The Center also organized a series of trainings for the Prosecutor General's investigators on the specifics of crimes of this nature.

-- In addition, during 2005 the Prosecutor General's Office worked in close cooperation with UNDP, ABA-CEELI, OSCE and other international organizations, participating in numerous seminars, roundtables and conferences, serving to raise the Prosecutor General's staff's awareness about international practices on fighting trafficking.

-- UMCOR organized a number of training seminars with border guards from Zvartnots airport and the Bagratashen (Armenian/Georgian) border crossing on identifying and assisting trafficking victims.

E) INVESTIGATING AND PROSECUTING GOAM COMPLICITY

16. (SBU) The Government of Armenia has unfortunately made no progress in vigorously investigating allegations of prosecutors and border guards, complicity in trafficking and prosecuting and convicting law enforcement officials who facilitate trafficking. Although the MFA noted that the

President, in response to the concerns identified in the annual U.S. TIP report, instructed the Chief Prosecutor's office to instruct the appropriate law enforcement agencies to prevent, identify and strongly prosecute those responsible, the Prosecutor General's office contended that there were no cases of assistance or complicity of the workers of the law-enforcement bodies, including the Prosecutor system as well as the border guards, in trafficking in persons, organization of prostitution or involvement into prostitution and that no such information was obtained during the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases. The subject of one of the most consistent victim and NGO allegations of complicity remains in his position within the Prosecutor General's office's anti-trafficking task force.

EVANS